

to receive, the rack-rent of each house, if the same were let at a rack-rent), the building whereof shall have been completed, but which shall not have been inhabited by any person as tenant or occupier thereof before the confirmation of the bye-law, shall, within one calendar month after the confirmation of this bye-law, give to the Metropolitan Commissioners of Sewers, at their said principal office, written notice thereof, together with a plan, sketch, and necessary description, showing "some particulars as set forth for houses about to be built."

The regulation does not apply to houses within the city of London. By a second bye-law, district-surveyors are required, subject to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.* for each breach, to "transmit, on Monday in each week, to the principal office of the Metropolitan Commissioners of Sewers, No. 1, Greek-street, Soho, in the county of Middlesex, so that the same may be received at the said office by or before eight o'clock in the afternoon on that day, a return, in the form hereunder specified, of all notices of building or rebuilding houses and buildings within the parts and places hereinafter mentioned, in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and Kent, respectively, received by him under the last-mentioned Act of Parliament, during each and every week ending Saturday, at twelve o'clock at noon preceding such return."

LONDON IN TIMES PAST.

CONSIDERING the enormous, and in many parts demoralised, population of London, it is marvellous there should be so little personal insecurity, and it is rather a rare occurrence, for people in the habit of going about town, to meet with the slightest molestation, by day or night, comparatively speaking, to times past, as the following instances will serve to show:—At Kensington, on Sunday evenings, a bell used to be rung at intervals to muster the people returning to town, and as soon as the multitude had assembled sufficiently strong to ensure mutual protection, it set off. George the Fourth and the late Duke of York, when very young men, were stopped one night in a hackney coach and robbed, on Hay-hill, Berkeley-square. To cross Hounslow-heath or Finchley-common, now both enclosed, after sunset, was a service of great danger: those who ventured were always well armed, and some few had even ball-proof carriages. In those days there was a house on Finchley-common well known as the place of rendezvous for highwaymen. Fortunately these occurrences are now matters of history. The standard of wealth is no less changed than the standard of safety. Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, was once the street of fashionable shops, what Bond-street and Regent-street are now. Within memory, the principal carriage approach to old Drury-lane Theatre, the last but one before the present, was through that part of Drury-lane which is now a flagged foot passage, and called Drury-court, just opposite the new church in the Strand. The ring in Hyde-park, so celebrated in old novels and plays, and so often the scene of duels, was a short time ago still to be traced round a clump of trees near the foot barracks: it enclosed an area of about ninety yards in diameter, and about forty-five yards wide: here used to assemble all the fashion of the day now diffused round the whole park, and partially in the Regent's-park. At the rate the country is advancing in improvement and wealth, what will be the comparison at the end of the next half-century?—G. I. R.

AUCTIONEER'S FEE.—In an Eschequer case it has been recently ruled, that an auctioneer cannot charge his commission on sales effected by others, although his authority to sell he still unrevoked. In the case in question the auctioneer, Mr. Shuttleworth, had previously, but unsuccessfully, tried to sell the property (a house and land at Wimbledon) at auction. He had also got an offer for private sale, but was told the property had been already sold by another agent, named Mason, also employed by the plaintiff. Witnesses declared the custom to be in favour of such a charge, but could cite no instance of its being insisted on. Does not such a decision at once enable a seller to obtain the services of as many selling-agents as he likes at the price of one, though at the cost of all?

Miscellaneous.

DIGGINGS, FURNESS ABBEY.—Our readers may remember that Mr. Sharpe, in his paper on Furness Abbey, read when the Archaeological Association went there, asserted that the Hospitium (or reception-room for strangers) was on the south side of the Conventual church, running in a southerly direction. On that occasion some slight excavations had been made, which proved, by laying bare a column, that a building had existed. The question, on the minds of many who were then, and probably still are, opposed to Mr. Sharpe's view was, what kind of a building was it? He also maintained that the windows of the Hospitium did not overlook the cloisters, but were placed on the opposite or western side. Also, that the building was usually of great length. In these views, Mr. Sharpe differs, in toto, with the opinion of all the historians of Furness Abbey, who generally place the Hospitium near the Gustaf's Chapel. A fortnight ago an exploring party made some excavations at Furness, and established, in confirmation of this opinion, the existence of a building, of great length, laying bare several of its columns. Three of the columns were laid bare, and were found to be equidistant. Mr. S. was of opinion that the building would be found to extend to two hundred and fifteen feet, representing fifteen columns, equidistant, and on excavating at that extreme distance an octagonal column was found with feathered masonry on each side.

BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.—On the 11th inst. Mr. Pettigrew, V.P., in the chair, Mr. Pratt exhibited several interesting antiquities, amongst them a picture supposed to represent the massacre of the 11,000 virgins near the city of Cologne. Such a picture, taken from a Spanish galleon, is described by Howell, and he says it was exhibited at Westminster in the time of James I. From this description Mr. Planche was inclined to think that the picture then exhibited was the very one now produced. A communication was received from Mr. E. Sharpe, describing some excavations undertaken on the site of the Hospitium at Furness Abbey, during the last month, which is noticed above. The rubbish accumulated on the floor, appeared to be the ruins of the building undisturbed, and is of a depth of from 5 to 6 feet: a considerable quantity of burnt wood upon the floor appears to indicate the firing of the building before it fell. A full account of these discoveries, with additional information respecting this ruin, obtained from documents now in France, will appear in the next number of the society's journal. Mr. H. S. Cuming read a paper upon the history of the drill and drill-bow.

ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND.—The second meeting of the Institute was held in the Hopetoun Rooms on Thursday evening last week. The Very Rev. Edward B. Ramsay read a paper "On the Method by which the Members generally may practically follow out the Architectural purposes of the Institute." Mr. David Cousin next read a paper, entitled "What will it cost?" showing the evil effects resulting from the prominent and almost exclusive consideration often given to the element of cost in the erection of buildings, in the sacrifice of elegance and beauty in the design.

PROPOSED ALTERATION OF THE "LONDON MECHANICS' INSTITUTION."—I was glad to see an announcement in your journal of a proposal for forming the now London Mechanics' Institution into a college; partly because it has long been in my mind to call the attention of your readers to the desirability of the formation of a people's college, and this seems to be a favourable opening; and partly because I think it will be the means of making that institution more really and permanently useful than it is at present. The object of my addressing you is to urge the adoption of the proposal upon the present members, and to assist in keeping the thing before the public, as probably that will be one of the best means of promoting its success. The present institution is in many respects a misnomer, for there are but few ordinary mechanics who can afford the expense of its high subscription and the extra charges for the classes. Besides, the

kind of information which is, I think, most needed by mechanics and others of the same class, is not that which partakes of the superficial and general, but that which assimilates more nearly to an educational drilling; and it appears to be the object of this proposal so to alter the present institution as to direct it of its general character, and to give it this educational aspect, and by this means fill up the chasm which now exists between our ordinary day-schools and those seats of learning usually called colleges, now confined in those who are able to devote their days to study, while the formation of this Birkbeck, or People's, or Mechanics' College, call it what you please, would give those whose days are occupied by business the opportunity of getting what Charles Knight calls somewhere "special education," viz., a sort of college course.

MECHANIC.

WIDE ESTIMATING.—Half-a-dozen correspondents have sent us the list of tenders for taking down and rebuilding the "Artichoke" wine vaults, Clare-market (Mr. Tatlock, architect), but publication seeming to have no good effect, we do not print it. There were twenty competitors, and the quantities were supplied to all. The highest was 1,014*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.*, and then they went down in regular progression to 52*l.* Mr. Treherne's was accepted at 617*l.*

OLD-STREET EXTENSION, AND NEW OXFORD-STREET JUNCTION.—The necessity of this line of communication from Shoreditch to the western districts of the metropolis has long been felt, and is becoming daily more apparent. No other proposed new line of street possesses greater facilities for construction: it is already formed up to Goswell-street, where the screen wall of the Charter-house grounds cuts it short. It would then pass through St. John's-square, and cut Victoria-street at right angles, thence by King's-row to New Oxford-street. The character of the property through which it would pass is of the most inferior description, and the length of new-street would only be about five furlongs. It would greatly relieve the City-streets, now wholly insufficient for the traffic, and, if continued the full width of Old-street, would form a noble line from the west and south-west districts to Shoreditch, Hackney, and the Eastern Counties Terminus.—ARCHITECT.

STATE OF CLERKENWELL COURTS AND ALLEYS.—I would invite public attention to the condition of Bell-alley, Rose-alley, Frypan-alley, Lamb-court, Cock-court, and Broadway, Turnmill-street. To most of these courts there is but one entrance, this is under 3 feet wide,* in fact, two persons can scarcely pass; the houses are three stories, about 30 feet high, let in different tenements: men, women, and donkeys find a shelter together, and a scene of squalid misery and moral degradation, that would vie with old Paris, or the closes of Glasgow, presents itself to the philanthropist,—a scene that would shame this boasted centre of civilization, and be a scandal to the nineteenth century.—S.

WROUGHT-IRON BEAM-PLATE.—In our last number we copied from the *Guteshead Observer* a notice of beam-plates manufactured at the Derwent Ironworks for Messrs. Tud and Macgregor, of Glasgow. We have seen these extraordinary specimens of labour. At the station of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway there lay four beams of malleable iron, oval shaped and closely wrought, measuring 17 feet 6 inches in length, 4 feet 8 inches in extreme breadth, and 11 inch in thickness. The weight of each is about 25 cwt. And all this comes from the hand, or "rolling,"—not by fusion or casting.—*Daily Mail.* The paper referred to states, as to the clipping of this beam into shape, that with a simple pair of scissors the required figure is cut out of the sheet of iron with as much ease and exactness as a thrifty housewife, after she has read the *Observer*, clips it into a "pattern."

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, LONDON.—The principal merchants and brokers of London are moving to have the area of the Royal Exchange covered in with glass, so as to afford shelter to the merchants when on "Change. We urged the necessity of this long ago.

* The Buildings Act provides that every alley must be 20 feet wide, or as wide as the houses are in height, and have two distinct entrances.